

South Hetton Primary School

Frederick Terrace, South Hetton, Durham, DH6 2TJ

Inspection dates		8–9 October 2014	
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Senior leaders have failed to act decisively to reverse the decline in pupils' achievement and to address inadequate teaching over time. Systems to check the school's performance lack rigour; as a result, judgements about the school's performance are inaccurate.
- Too many children leave Reception without the essential skills that they need to make a successful start to their learning in Year 1.
- Pupils make inadequate progress in their reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' skills in making sense of letters and sounds that form words are underdeveloped in Reception and in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching is inadequate in the early years and in Key Stage 1. Teachers do not make enough use of the available progress data to set work at the right level in order to stretch pupils' thinking, including for the most able.
- The performance management of teachers is not effective enough in holding them to account for pupils' progress and achievement.
- Teaching requires improvement in Years 3 to 6, because the level of challenge in tasks is not well matched to pupils' abilities and needs. Lessons often lack that essential spark to motivate pupils to think analytically and solve problems.
- Attainment gaps between those disadvantaged pupils and their classmates and other groups nationally, are not closing quickly enough.
- Too few pupils have a real enthusiasm for learning.
- Middle leaders do not yet have the skills and the opportunities to support senior leaders in the checking and improving of the quality of pupils' learning.
- Governors do not always receive a precise enough analysis of school data and do not have the skills or confidence to hold the school to account for its performance.

The school has the following strengths

- The curriculum and other activities, including sport, provided by the school present positive opportunities for pupils' personal development.
- Almost all pupils behave well, form positive relationships and treat each other with respect.
- The newly appointed early year's leader has had a positive impact since her appointment at the start of the current term.
- Pupils are well cared for and report that they feel safe in school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons, including four paired observations and work scrutiny carried out with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons in order to check the quality of what is provided for pupils. They also visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and had discussions with the headteacher, parents and carers collecting their children, subject leaders, staff, governors and the local authority educational development adviser.
- The inspection team also examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, the school's view of how well it is doing, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of 16 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pauline Piddington	Additional Inspector
Lucie Stephenson	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- South Hetton is an average sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are of White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below that usually found.
- Currently, there are an above average proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding.
- The provision in the Nursery is part-time, either mornings or afternoons.
- The school provides a breakfast club each day.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the school's senior leadership and a significant proportion of the teaching staff has changed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve leadership and management at all levels, including governance by:
 - improving the effectiveness and the rigour of the checks that the school makes in order to judge its performance, including making more thorough and precise checks on the quality of teaching and learning
 - ensuring that the arrangements for the management of teachers' performance are robust and hold all teachers to account for the progress that their pupils make
 - providing staff with effective support and training to improve and develop their skills
 - ensuring that improvement planning is well-focused with measurable targets for improvement and tight timescales
 - increasing the rigour with which the school collects and analyses information about pupils' progress including the progress made by different groups of pupils
 - making certain that governors are provided with up-to-date and accurate information about the progress and achievement of pupils
 - ensuring that middle leaders have the skills and the opportunities to play a full and active part to support leadership in the drive to improve school performance
 - providing governors with bespoke training to give them the necessary skills and confidence so that they are able to hold the school to account for pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- Eradicate all inadequate teaching and make sure all is at least good in order to significantly raise pupils' achievement and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 1 by:
 - urgently raising teachers' expectations of what pupils of all abilities, including the most able can do and achieve
 - ensuring that assessment information about pupils' attainment and progress is accurate and used to match activities to the abilities and needs of pupils including the most able
 - making sure that pupils have an enthusiasm for learning by setting work that captures their interests and engages them in their learning
 - ensuring that all staff check pupils' progress during lessons so that they are able to adapt tasks and

eliminate any misconceptions

- sharing the existing good practice to improve weaker teaching
- making certain that teachers' marking provides written, well-defined steps for improvement and pupils correct their mistakes
- ensuring that all staff have the same high expectations of the accuracy with which pupils' work is set out, especially in mathematics
- making sure that there is a constant focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils to remove any attainment gaps between them and their peers in all subjects.

- Improve the quality of provision in the early years so that all children, regardless of their starting points, achieve at least well and start Year 1 with the essential skills that they need by:
 - improving the quality of the assessment of children's development in each area of learning, especially in their speech and language, so that children's progress is accurately judged and making certain that the resulting information is used to plan activities that move children's learning on
 - making sure that children have interesting opportunities to explore, investigate for themselves and solve problems, both in and outdoors so they are able to become inquisitive and think for themselves
 - ensuring that staff actively support children's learning by continually prompting and checking their thinking
 - making certain that leaders and managers rigorously check whether or not the actions they have taken are having the required impact on accelerating progress and raising achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Senior leaders are not having sufficient impact on improving school performance by creating a positive climate in which high aspirations, effective teaching and good behaviour can thrive. Their checks on the effectiveness of teaching and on how well pupils learn and make progress are not thorough enough. Middle leaders, though beginning to develop the necessary leadership skills, lack training and the opportunity to effectively contribute to the drive to improve the school. As a result, the school's view of its performance is inaccurate. This is apparent in the low achievement over time in both the early years and Key Stage 1.
- School improvement planning, although identifying the correct priorities, does not focus sharply enough on raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and improving rates of progress in all subjects. There is an absence of challenging targets and precise timescales in the planning. As a result, the momentum for improvement lacks the vital drive and direction to ensure rapid school improvement.
- Leaders do not check the progress of different groups of pupils precisely enough, such as the most able or disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional support. Consequently, the most able are not challenged enough and the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others are not closing quickly enough.
- Arrangements for judging a teacher's performance are not effective enough in holding them to account for pupils' progress and achievement. Checks of pupils' learning in lessons are not frequent or accurate enough and the scrutiny of pupils' work lacks sharpness. The development points which emerge from observations are not closely enough linked to accelerating progress and driving up achievement. Additionally, they do not inform staff training programmes well enough and not enough is done to share existing good practice in the school.
- The equality of opportunity for pupils is not well promoted, because gaps in the achievement and attainment of different groups of pupils remain too wide and progress rates vary too much. The extra funding for those disadvantaged pupils is not used effectively to address specific weaknesses in their learning and help them prepare for the next stage of their education.
- The quality of the curriculum provided both during and after school, is varied and interesting. Yet opportunities are missed to practise reading, writing and mathematical skills across all subjects. The primary school sports funding is used well to foster staff coaching skills, maintain high participation rates and develop individual skills, such as in gymnastics. The curriculum positively promotes essential British values.
- The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The Rights Respecting initiative has a very positive impact, teaching pupils to value respect and tolerance in all their relationships. This opens the way for pupils to apply these qualities in the wider community.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.
- The local authority undertakes regular visits and has supported new staff proficiently. Yet, over time they have not provided sufficient challenge to ensure that the school has tackled weaknesses in performance quickly and successfully enough.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body are committed and supportive. They display a clear vision of a school at the heart of the village community, successfully raising pupils' aspirations and achievement. Despite their high level of care and commitment, governors do not have the essential skills and confidence to challenge the school or local authority robustly enough to make certain that all pupils achieve well. Their checks on staff performance management arrangements do not ensure that classroom performance is linked to pay progression. Additionally, they have not thoroughly scrutinised the impact of the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils. They have relied upon an imprecise analysis of school information which has not provided a full picture of the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. As a result, they have had an inaccurate view of school performance and its weaknesses, especially in teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In classrooms, corridors and playground pupils' conduct is good. At lunchtime in the dining hall, high staff expectations ensure that routines are extremely well

followed and relationships with staff, which are sometimes excellent, result in the happy, friendly atmosphere. The breakfast club provides a calm and ordered start to the day.

- Most pupils are keen to learn and their enjoyment of school life is evident. Nevertheless, behaviour requires improvement, because pupils lose concentration and become distracted when the work set does not capture and hold their interest well enough.
- Pupils' attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now in line with the national average. This is a consequence of successful strategies adopted by the school and the positive engagement of parents.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Almost all parents agree. In discussions with pupils, they observe that, 'children treat one another nicely' and that, 'name calling is rare'. They observed that staff listen carefully to any concerns or worries that they may have and were quick to take action if required.
- Pupils demonstrate a good grasp of how to avoid danger and risk, such as when using new technology. They are well informed about bullying in its various forms. Pupils were clear about the boundaries set for their conduct, both during lessons and at social times. They were well aware of the importance of displaying respect and tolerance in all of their relationships. This was evident in the care older pupils displayed towards younger pupils, such as when acting responsibly as a playground friend or buddy to prevent any mean or unkind behaviour.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate. The impact of teaching over time in the early years and in Key Stage 1 has failed to quicken progress and lift the achievement of pupils of all abilities and needs. In Key Stage 2, teaching requires improvement, because too often teaching does not inspire and excite pupils' thinking to ensure that they make rapid progress consistently in all subjects.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Assessment information is not always accurate. Teachers and classroom assistants do not use pupils' progress information skilfully or consistently enough to make sure that planned activities constantly stretch and challenge their knowledge and understanding. For example, most able pupils often find work too easy.
- Teachers do not make systematic and accurate enough checks on pupils' learning in lessons. The demands teachers make of the amount and quality of pupils' work are not high enough. Work in books is often poorly presented, or incomplete. Corrections are not done or there is not enough completed in the time allowed. This is particularly the case in mathematics where issues with accuracy of presentation contributes to errors.
- The impact of the intervention and support that those pupils with special educational needs receive is uneven and does not lead to a pattern of steady progress. Checks that are made on the effectiveness of the help provided are not analytical enough. Consequently, misconceptions are not corrected quickly and learning is not continuously built upon.
- The teaching of early reading and writing skills, although improving, has not been effective enough over time to extend pupils' skills quickly enough, especially in Key Stage 1. Opportunities are missed across all subjects to practise skills and foster an enjoyment and love of reading. Consequently, pupils do not communicate, read or write as well as they should.
- Regular marking is completed, but teacher's written guidance in pupils' books about how to improve their work is variable in its quality and is often lacking in challenge. Corrections are not always completed, especially in mathematics, when requested by the teachers to strengthen pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Not enough teachers check how well pupils are progressing during lessons to allow work to be adjusted to help pupils overcome misunderstandings or add to the level of challenge.
- Where pupils' progress is much quicker, this is because the teacher's expectations of what pupils can achieve are higher. Activities are tailored to meet individual abilities, capture and sustain interest while continually adding to the pupils' prior learning. Questioning constantly checks and tests pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were observed being absorbed using a monochrome image of a 'creepy mansion' to stimulate their use of descriptive language.

The achievement of pupils**is inadequate**

- Achievement is inadequate. Although by the end of Year 6 attainment is in line with expected levels, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is too low. Too many children are not ready to start their learning in Year 1 because they have not gained the skills that they need by the end of Reception.
- Progress in Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 2, is too slow. By the end of Year 2, a very large proportion do not reach the level expected for their age. Pupils' writing skills are particularly weak. Very few most able pupils reach the levels they are capable of in all subjects. Although pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds is improving in Year 1 and progress starting to quicken, too few pupils exceed the expected standards.
- Progress requires improvement between Years 3 and 6. Despite some improvement, progress, achievement and attainment across all subjects remains too variable for all pupil groups. In mathematics, standards in 2013 test results were marginally above the national average, but standards in reading, writing and spelling, punctuation and grammar were low. Most recent test results reveal modest improvements in pupils' literacy skills as a result of improved teaching methods. Yet, progress is hardly ever good or rapid, because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not as high as they need to be. Too few pupils exceed what is expected of them.
- Although the progress of the most able pupils is faster in mathematics than in reading and writing, too few reach the levels of which they are capable by the end of Year 6. The work that is set for them is insufficiently thought-provoking or demanding, such as in their extended writing or applying their mathematical skills. Too many opportunities are missed that encourage pupils of all ages to think critically, analyse a problem, make decisions and explain their thinking.
- The progress of pupils of all ages in developing their reading skills is too slow. Additionally, pupils of all ages do not read widely enough. The teaching of early reading skills is not systematic enough. Progression from hearing, to seeing, saying, reading and writing is slow. Opportunities are missed to practise their skills across all subjects. Older, most able pupils read at the levels expected of them for their age, but many pupils have weaknesses in their ability to grasp the full meaning or subtle messages in the text.
- The progress and achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is inadequate. Although their social and emotional needs are well met by caring staff, their academic abilities are not always accurately identified and methods and tasks are not always closely enough matched to their needs, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The school is slowly narrowing the gap in standards between non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged pupils, both within school and with similar groups nationally. Nevertheless, the gap is not closing swiftly enough, because the weaknesses in pupils' skills are not accurately enough identified and their progress carefully enough checked for improvement. At the end of Year 6 in 2013, test results revealed that disadvantaged pupils were four terms behind others in mathematics, reading and writing in school and three terms behind their non-disadvantaged peers nationally. Current school Year 6 data and inspection observation evidence reveals gaps of two terms in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision**is inadequate**

- Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge below those that are typically expected for their age, particularly in speech and language and social skills. Despite displaying positive behaviour and good levels of self-control, achievement by the end of Reception is too low. As a result too many children do not reach the expected level for their age.
- Over time in the Nursery and Reception, children make inadequate progress. The achievement of children with special educational needs is inadequate. Children's skills in understanding and sounding out new words are a particular weakness. Although the proportion reaching a good level of development is rising, too many children enter Year 1 without the essential skills they need to achieve well.
- Activities and programmes of work and play do not provide sufficient interesting and stimulating opportunities for children to investigate, explore and practise their skills. This includes when working outdoors. This slows children's learning because they are not encouraged enough to be curious about the world around them and think for themselves.
- Staff do not always follow children's learning closely enough, not enough is done to prompt children and thereby deepen their knowledge and understanding. Consequently, over time the quality of teaching is inadequate.
- Children settle quickly and happily in the warm and friendly environment. Parents are happy with the way

their children settle into classroom routines and with the quality of care that their children receive.

- The newly appointed leader of the early years is having an impact. During the inspection, clear improvements in the quality of teaching of how letters and sounds form words were observed. A first priority has been to establish systems to observe and record children's progress accurately, in order to provide a full picture of the progress that children are making. Therefore planning for the next stage of learning is now starting to be more precise and accurate. This is beginning to help tackle the legacy of low expectations that have existed and ensure future judgements of the effectiveness of the provision are accurate. However the observations of children's speech and language are still not thorough enough.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114195
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	448763

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Robson
Headteacher	Lucy Griffiths
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2010
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